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RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)PAGE 01 CARACA 12685 01 OF 02 101653Z
ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	COR-01	ACDA-17	AID-01	AMAD-01	CIAE-00	C-01
	OASY-00	DINT-05	DODE-00	EB-01	HA-09	H-01	INRE-00
	INR-01	IO-19	LAB-04	L-03	ADS-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00
	OIC-02	OMB-01	PA-01	PM-02	PRS-01	P-01	SIL-00
	SNP-00	SP-00	SR-00	SS-00	STR-17	TRSE-00	T-01
	USIE-00	RPE-00	/091W				

-----847AF2 101656Z /38

O 031810Z DEC 92
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5927
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CARACAS 12685

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - TAGS & SUBJECT LINE

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PHUM, PGOV, VE
SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH [REDACTED] ABOUT
HUMAN RIGHTS ASPECTS OF CURRENT SITUATION

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REF: CARACAS 12575

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY. AMBASSADOR MET WITH [REDACTED] TO VOICE
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CLEARLY OUR SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND PARTICULARLY OUR
CONCERN THAT DETENTION OF CANDIDATES OF CONSTITUTIONAL
PARTIES IN PERIOD LEADING UP TO SUNDAY'S ELECTIONS COULD
DAMAGE VENEZUELA'S IMAGE AND UNDERCUT THE ELECTION
PROCESS. [REDACTED] KEY INDIVIDUAL INVOLVED
(COLMENARES) HAD ALREADY BEEN RELEASED. HE CLAIMED ONE
CAUSA R MAYORAL CANDIDATE HAD BEEN "CAUGHT IN THE ACT" AND
WOULD BE BROUGHT TO TRIAL. HE AGREED TO LOOK PROMPTLY
INTO OTHER CASES. REGARDING RADIO RUMBOS AFFAIR, [REDACTED]
EXPLAINED GOV'S POSITION, BUT SEEMED TO ACCEPT
AMBASSADOR'S ARGUMENT THAT APPEARANCE OF CENSORSHIP SHOULD

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: OSCAR J OLSON
CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL REASON: 1.4(B), 1.4(D)
DECLASSIFY AFTER: 2 DEC 2017
DATE/CASE ID: 19 OCT 2006 200503206

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BE AVOIDED AND SANCTION APPLIED TO RADIO RUMBOS, IF GOV
DEEMED ONE ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL, SHOULD BE MODERATE. END
SUMMARY

3. AMBASSADOR MET WITH [REDACTED]
DECEMBER 2 PRIMARILY TO RAISE CERTAIN POTENTIAL HUMAN
RIGHTS PROBLEMS WHICH HAVE ARISEN IN AFTERMATH OF NOVEMBER
27 COUP ATTEMPT. DCM ALSO PARTICIPATED IN MEETING.

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4. AMBASSADOR VOICED CONCERN ABOUT REPORTS THAT A NUMBER
OF CANDIDATES FROM THE CONSTITUTIONAL LEFTIST PARTIES HAD
BEEN DETAINED. HE MADE SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO IVAN
COLMENARES, MAS CANDIDATE FOR GOVERNOR OF PORTUGUESA, WHO
HAS BEEN LEADING IN THE POLLS IN THAT STATE. AMBASSADOR
NOTED THAT THIS SORT OF ACTION COULD BE DAMAGING TO
VENEZUELA'S IMAGE ABROAD AND COULD EVEN UNDERCUT THE
CREDIBILITY OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS, WHICH, AT THIS POINT
IS KEY TO PROTECTING THE COUNTRY'S DEMOCRATIC STABILITY.
HE STATED THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR THE GOV TO DEMONSTRATE
MAXIMUM RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. [REDACTED] THAT

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IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT COLMENARES HAD ALREADY BEEN
RELEASED AND HAD REINITIATED HIS CAMPAIGN. (COMMENT.
EMBOFF SAW COLMENARES ON TV DECEMBER 2.) HE MENTIONED
THAT THERE WAS A CAUSA R CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR OF CABIMAS
(WITH NO CHANCE OF WINNING) WHO HAD BEEN CAUGHT WITH A
MEGAPHONE IN HIS HAND ON NOVEMBER 27 INCITING THE POPULACE
TO REVOLT. THAT INDIVIDUAL (WHOSE NAME WE BELIEVE FROM
FBIS REPORT TO BE NOE ACOSTA) WOULD BE TRIED AS PART OF
THE SUMMARY COURT MARTIAL PROCEDURE TO BE APPLIED TO ALL
COUP PARTICIPANTS. [REDACTED] SAID THAT THERE WERE
ABOUT FOUR OR FIVE MAS OR CAUSA R CANDIDATES FOR CITY
COUNCILMEN POSITIONS IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE COUNTRY WHO
HAVE BEEN DETAINED. IN LIGHT OF THE AMBASSADOR'S
COMMENTS, HE STATED, [REDACTED]

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ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE AMBASSADOR'S GENERAL CONCERN WAS
CORRECT. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THESE ELECTIONS BE
PERCEIVED BOTH HERE AND ABROAD AS TOTALLY OPEN AND FAIR.
HE ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE "GOLPISTAS" HAD TIMED THEIR
MOVE PRECISELY TO PREVENT THE ELECTIONS FROM TAKING
PLACE. THIS MEANT THAT THE NECESSARY PROCESS OF DEALING
WITH THE AFTERMATH OF THE ATTEMPT, INCLUDING REMOVING
CERTAIN CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES, CONFLICTED WITH THE
DESIRE TO CREATE AN IMAGE OF MAXIMUM OPENNESS.

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5. IN THIS CONTEXT, THE AMBASSADOR CONGRATULATED [REDACTED]
ON THE GOV'S DECISION TO LIFT MOST OF THE RESTRICTIONS ON
CIVIL LIBERTIES ANNOUNCED IN THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF
THE COUP ATTEMPT. [REDACTED] INDICATED THAT THE ONLY
RESTRICTIONS REMAINING RELATED TO SEARCH AND SEIZURE.
THESE WOULD CONTINUE FOR NEXT FEW WEEKS, PARTLY BECAUSE
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GOVERNMENT STILL NEEDED INCREASED POWERS FOR INVESTIGATIVE
PURPOSES, BUT MOSTLY BECAUSE THE SUMMARY TRIAL PROCESS FOR
COUP PARTICIPANTS, TO BE LEGALLY VALID, REQUIRED THAT
STATE OF EMERGENCY BE IN PLACE WITH AT LEAST SOME
GUARANTEES SUSPENDED. HE ANTICIPATED THAT THE TRIAL
PROCESS WOULD BEGIN THIS WEEK AND BE COMPLETED WITHIN
ABOUT 10 DAYS, AFTER WHICH APPEALS COULD BE LODGED WITH
THE SUPREME COURT. THERE WOULD BE NO TIME LIMIT ON
SUPREME COURT CONSIDERATION OF APPEALS. IN RESPONSE TO A
QUESTION, [REDACTED] CIVILIANS, AS WELL AS
MILITARY, WOULD BE SUBJECT TO THE SUMMARY PROCEDURE, AS
LONG AS THEY HAD BEEN "CAUGHT IN THE ACT."

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6. [REDACTED] THE THE MATTER OF RADIO RUMBOS. HE
RELATED THAT ON THE DAY OF THE COUP ATTEMPT THE STATION
WAS INCITING PEOPLE TO GO INTO THE STREETS. THE GOV MADE

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ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	CIAE-00	C-01	DODE-00	HA-09	H-01	INRE-00
	INR-01	L-03	ADS-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OMB-01	PA-01

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PM-02 PRS-01 P-01 SNP-00 SP-00 SSO-00 SS-00
TRSE-00 T-01 USIE-00 /023W

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O 031810Z DEC 92
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5928
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 CARACAS 12685

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PHUM, PGOV, VE
SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH [REDACTED] ABOUT
SEVERAL TELEPHONE CALLS ASKING THE STATION TO CUT IT OUT.
THE MESSAGE WAS IGNORED. THE GOV THEN SENT A DISIP GROUP
TO THE STATION'S PREMISES. PERSONNEL AT THE STATION
REFUSED THE DISIP ENTRY. A STRUGGLE ENSUED IN WHICH
DAMAGE WAS DONE TO PROPERTY. [REDACTED] THAT THE
RADIO RUMBOS HAD DONE MUCH THE SAME THING ON THE NIGHT OF
MARCH 10 DURING THE "CACEROLAZO" (POT BANGING) EVENT.
THEY HAD BEEN WARNED AT THAT TIME. THIS NOW WAS A
RECURRENCE. IT WAS THE GOVERNMENT'S VIEW THAT THE STATION
MUST BE SANCTIONED TO DEMONSTRATE TO OTHERS THAT THERE ARE
LIMITS TO IRRESPONSIBILITY WHICH CANNOT BE EXCEEDED.

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AMBASSADOR WARNED THAT STRONG MEASURES TAKEN AGAINST RADIO
RUMBOS WOULD RESULT IN CRITICISM ABROAD. HE RECALLED
IMAGE PROBLEMS GOV CREATED WHEN IT ATTEMPTED TO IMPOSE
CENSORSHIP IN AFTERMATH OF FEBRUARY 4 COUP ATTEMPT.
DRAWING ON OUR OWN HISTORY, AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT, FOR
EXAMPLE, THE ABOLITIONISTS DERIVED THEIR STRENGTH IN LARGE
MEASURE IN THE YEARS BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR FROM
GOVERNMENTS' EFFORTS TO STIFLE THEM. CENSORSHIP IS A VERY
DANGEROUS TOOL WHICH ALMOST NEVER WORKS, HE STATED.

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[REDACTED] LISTENED CAREFULLY AND APPEARED TO TAKE THE
AMBASSADOR'S POINTS, PROMISED THAT MEASURES AGAINST RADIO
RUMBOS WOULD NOT BE "HURRIED, IMPROVISED OR EXAGGERATED".
IN ANY CASE, NOTHING WOULD BE DONE BEFORE SUNDAY'S
ELECTION. THE BEST APPROACH, HE SAID, MIGHT BE TO NAME A
COMMISSION TO STUDY THE MATTER. IN THE END, WHAT WOULD
PROBABLY RESULT WOULD BE A TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF THE
STATION'S LICENSE.

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7. [REDACTED] INDICATED THAT GOV WOULD ISSUE A DECREE "REGULATING" THE UNIVERSITY LAW PASSED DURING CALDERA'S ADMINISTRATION. THE NEW REGULATIONS WOULD PROVIDE SECURITY FORCES WITH LEGAL AUTHORITY TO PATROL THE STREETS ON UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES. THESE STREETS, HE INSISTED WERE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND THE GOVERNMENT HAD THE OBLIGATION TO ASSURE THEIR SAFETY. UNDER THE TERMS OF THE DECREE, SECURITY FORCES WILL STILL NOT BE AUTHORIZED TO PATROL UNIVERSITY BUILDINGS.

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8. COMMENT. OUR VIEW IS THAT THE GOV [REDACTED] [REDACTED] IS SENSITIVE TO THE DAMAGE COMPLAINTS ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES COULD DO TO COUNTRY'S IMAGE AT THIS TIME.
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[REDACTED] WILLING TO SEE TO IT THAT CANDIDATES FROM LEFTIST PARTIES WHO ARE NOT CLEARLY IMPLICATED IN THE COUP ARE NOT HELD IN RUN UP TO SUNDAY'S ELECTIONS. IT APPEARS, HOWEVER, THAT THERE ARE AT LEAST A FEW MORE INDIVIDUALS IN THIS CATEGORY THAN HE ADMITTED TO IN THIS CONVERSATION.

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